



State of Wisconsin  
**Department of Health and Family Services**

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Jim Doyle, Governor  
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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For Immediate Release

**Governor Doyle Proclaims Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week  
October 23rd - 29th**

(Madison – October 21, 2005)—Governor Jim Doyle has proclaimed October 23-29 as “Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week” in Wisconsin to raise awareness about the damaging effects of lead on children and ways it can be prevented.

“Our children are Wisconsin’s greatest resource and the community leaders of tomorrow, and our highest priority should be making sure that they grow up safe and healthy,” Governor Doyle said.

The main source of lead poisoning is lead-based paint in older homes. Lead is dangerous because it interferes with the normal development of a child’s brain, resulting in a lower IQ and a greater likelihood of behavior problems like aggression and hyperactivity.

Children under age 6 are most vulnerable to the effects of lead and are at-risk for lead poisoning if the child:

- Lives in or visits a house or building built before 1950 (including day care facilities or homes of friends or relatives).
- Lives in or visits a house or building built before 1978 with recent or ongoing renovations.
- Has a brother, sister, or playmate who has been diagnosed with lead poisoning.

“Lead poisoning of children is devastating to their health and ability to learn” said Helene Nelson, Secretary of the Department of Health and Family Services. “Prevention and testing are key to protecting children from lead poisoning.”

The only way to know if a child is poisoned is to test the child’s blood for lead. Ask your doctor for a blood lead test if your child is at-risk or you suspect your child may have lead poisoning.

Parents should beware of chipping, cracking and peeling paint because the risk of exposure increases as the paint breaks down into smaller particles. Chipping and peeling paint creates dust on doors, windows, banisters, and other places accessible to children. Paint chips and dust that get on a child’s hands and into their mouth are easily absorbed. When lead paint is intact, it is unlikely to cause exposure.

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To control lead hazards in your home seek professional help to remove or repair paint and use certified contractors when remodeling an older home. Call your local health department for assistance in eliminating lead hazards from your home.

Last year, approximately 3,300 children under age 6 were found to be lead poisoned in Wisconsin.

For more information about the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, go to <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/lead>.

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